Lincoln University
LEARN. LIBERATE. LEAD.
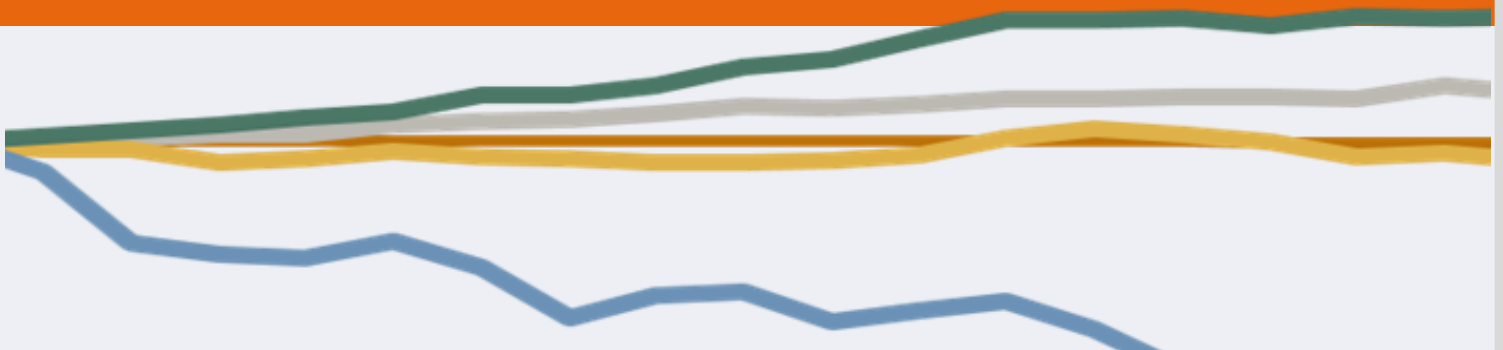
STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

2020-2021

**RECRUITMENT**   **RETENTION**   **GRADUATION**

Introduction:

Lincoln University is experiencing a renaissance. Lincoln University is now ranked in the top 20 among all HBCUs. This is an improvement of eight-points over our previous year's standing. Among all ranked HBCUs, Lincoln University is 12th and 11th for retention and graduation rates and 7th for alumni giving. The latter being a great indicator of how much Lincoln graduates continue to invest in the legacy of this great institution.

Other rankings of note are that, for the first time, our University is ranked among the top public universities in the Northern region, landing at number 40 and 41st among all northern region institutions for social mobility (percentage of Pell recipients graduated). In another social mobility ranking, Lincoln is number 1 among all 4-year institutions in Pennsylvania for moving individuals from the lowest to the highest socio-economic level. Lincoln was also ranked third in the region in post-secondary education mobility by Social Innovations Journal. Social mobility accolades singled the great return on investments made towards a Lincoln University degree.

Reaffirmation with commendations by the Middle-States Commission on Higher Education also signals revitalization at Lincoln. Being reaffirmed signals that Lincoln University continues to meets strict and rigorous quality standards which help in maintaining a valid, credible reputation among fellow institutions, students and the public.

In spite of Lincoln's rising tide, higher education in America is experiencing many challenges. Headlines are warning us about shrinking enrollments, school closures and declining state support for higher education. Nationally, enrollment in higher education has fallen nearly 9 percent since 2011, according to the National Student Clearinghouse. This decrease is relative to the growth boom experienced during the previous two decades. Several sources estimate that while Black and white high school graduates will decline by 2030, Hispanic high school graduates will increase during that same time period.

United States High School Graduates by Race and Ethnicity, Compared to SY 2012-13 (Thousands)
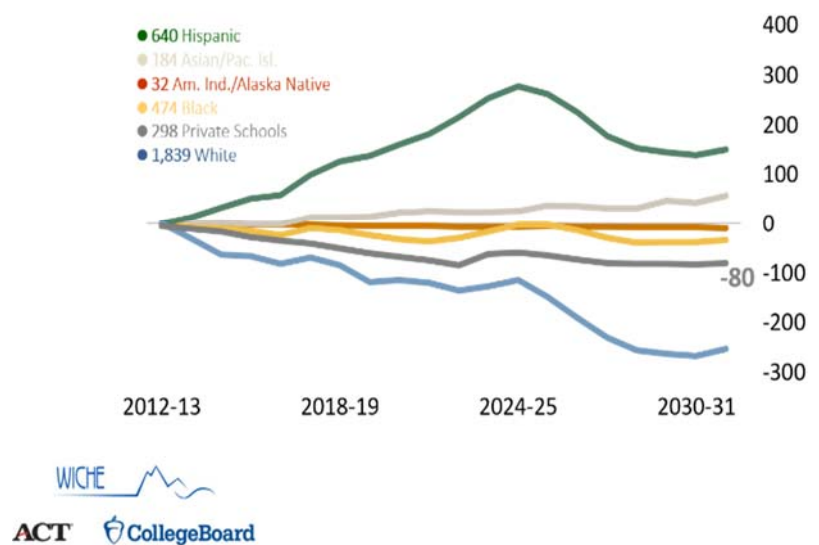
Regionally, sources predict growth in high school graduates in the south, west and southwest. Declines are predicted for every other region in the nation.

Regional Variation by College Board Region, 2012-13 to 2024-25
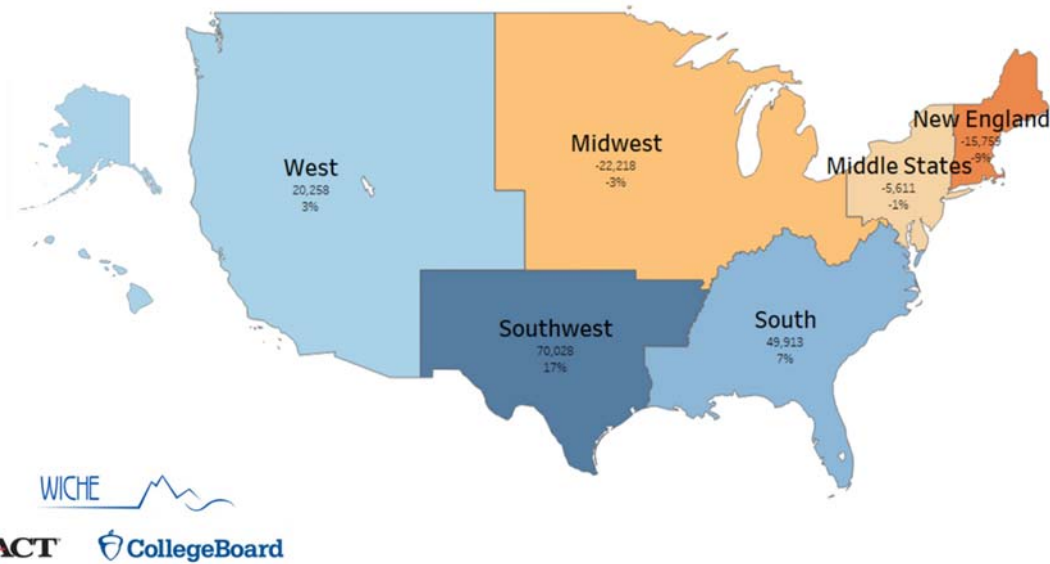
The data for Pennsylvania follows the national trends showing a strong decline in high school graduates overall by 2030 and especially for White students. Similar to the national trend, the number of Hispanic graduates in Pennsylvania will increase significantly in the next decade.

Projections of High School Graduates in Pennsylvania, 2012-13 to 2030-31
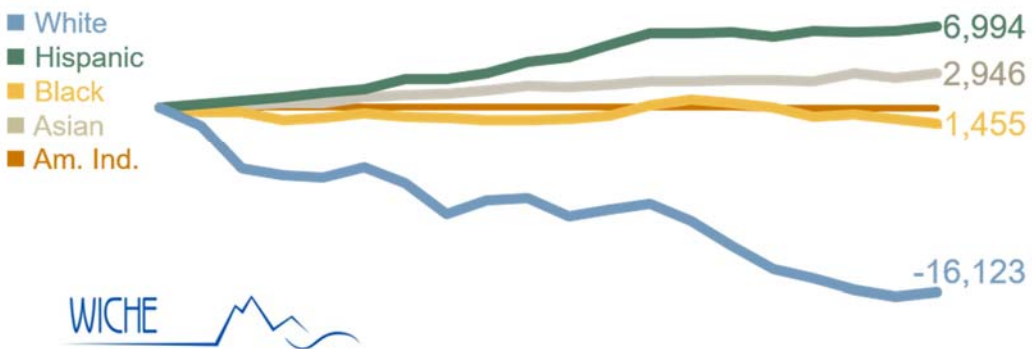
This state of affairs creates challenges for institutional sustainability. Changes in enrollment trends among college age students threatens our ability to accurately predict new student

yield. This in turn effects our ability to plan financially long-term as models for sustaining size as well as predicting growth are becoming more challenging.

The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEM) is designed to use the state of enrollment trends nationally and regionally as well as internal recruitment, retention, graduation and financial aid data to devise a long-term scheme for achieving the enrollment goals of the University. The SEM plan considers Lincoln's enrollment goals in the context of its mission as a small, historically Black, liberal arts institution with opportunity to grow in the areas of graduate, continuing and on-line education.

RECRUITMENT-Traditional Undergraduate Population

New First-Time Freshmen and New Transfer Students

New First-Time Freshmen enrollment grew at Lincoln from 448 in Fall 2014 to 664 in 2017 representing a 48% positive change. Since then, new first-time student enrollment has been on a steady decline. The Fall 2019 class of 445 reflects a loss of the 48% gain witnessed just two years prior.

New first-time first-year enrollment			
	Fall 2014	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2019**
Total	**448**	**664**	**445**
Female	60%	68%	66%
Male	40%	32%	34%
In-state	35%	38%	43%
Out-of-state & International	65%	62%	57%

Nonetheless, average SAT scores and high school GPAs have increased for the applicant, admitted, and enrolled student pools since 2015. The average SAT for enrolled students has increased about 100 points between 2015 and 2019. The average GPA for enrolled students has shown a slight increase from 2.83 to 2.99 during that same period.

New first-time first-year enrollment				
	Avg. High School GPA		Avg. SAT Score	
	Fall 2015	**Fall 2019**	**Fall 2015**	**Fall 2019**
Applicants	2.76	2.97	823	932
Admits	2.81	3.12	833	970
Enrolled	2.83	2.99	845	944

Lincoln's enrollment trends have been accompanied by steady increases in applications. Applications grew by 33% between 2015 and 2019 and admit rates decreased by 8%. The yield rate however has remained mostly flat at about 18% with the exception of one outlier year. Lincoln's yield rate is considerably lower than the national average of 35%.

New transfer student enrollment has also declined over the past 5 years. The transfer number hit a high of 97 in 2015 but has since declined to 79 in the Fall of 2019. This represented a 23% decrease.

New student enrollment				
	Freshmen		Transfer	
	Fall 2015	Fall 2019	Fall 2015	Fall 2019
# of applicants	3318	4429	318	215
Acceptance rate	91%	83%	69%	69%
Yield rate	15%	12%	44%	53%
Total students	458	445	97	79

Implications of Enrollment Trends for Lincoln University-First-Time-Freshman and Transfer Student Recruitment Strategies:

National trends showing a decline of high school graduates especially African Americans as well as declines for these populations in the state of Pennsylvania provide guidance for setting recruitment goals for Lincoln's main campus, especially in the context of current new-student enrollment at Lincoln. Primarily, the data suggests that growth goals should be modest. The era of ever larger new first-year classes appears to be on a steady decline, nationally. Additionally, Lincoln's internal data shows that the decline has begun and that it has especially affected the proportions of male students. The data is also suggesting that Lincoln is already attracting more applicants to its pool and that those who choose to enroll are among the best prepared. Yet yield remains a struggle. Finally, while In-State enrollment has increased, Lincoln remains attractive to students mostly from the surrounding states.

Taken together, the review suggests that recruitment goals over the next decade should focus on small incremental increases in new-first-time students and transfer students. For these reasons, the following recruitment goal and objectives have been established:

GOAL: Incremental increases in the number and mix of entering students on main campus from targeted populations (freshman, males, transfers, and international) ultimately reaching a main-campus new student population of 750 (600 new first-time and 150 transfer students) by 2030 while also improving selectivity.

Objective 1:   Execute a marketing campaign built on market research and a brand platform to demonstrate Lincoln's Strength to the public and prospective students.

Objective 2:   Improve overall service to Lincoln University prospective students and families that are serving as barriers to student success.

Objective 3:   Increase the number of freshmen enrolled from out-of-state markets.

Objective 4:   Increase the selectivity of freshmen enrolled for international and domestic admission.

Objective 5:   Increase completed transfer applications by 10%.

Objective 6:   Increase new transfer student enrollment from domestic markets.

Objective 7:   Increase the number of new international students enrolled.

Objective 8:   Increase the number of freshmen male students enrolled.

Objective 9:   Reduce unmet student financial need.

Objective 10: Move to Test Optional Admissions and Increased GPA Requirement

RETENTION- Undergraduate Population

Overall undergraduate enrollment trends at Lincoln showed an overall increase between 2014 and 2019. Enrollment grew from 1,589 in 2014 to 2,122 in 2018. Enrollment dropped 4% in 2019, following the enrollment decline witnessed across the country. During the period of growth, the percentage of male undergraduates fell from 42% to 34% increasing the gender gap among the student body. In-State students grew from 44% in 2011 to 48% in 2018. International student also increased from 2% to 3% of the entire student body.

Undergraduate Enrollment				
	Fall 2011	**Fall 2014**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**
Total	1749	1589	2122	2040
Female	58%	61%	66%	66%
Male	42%	39%	34%	34%
In-state	44%	43%	48%	48%
Out-of-state	54%	52%	49%	49%
International	2%	5%	3%	3%

 The one-year retention rate increased by 10% from the Fall 2016 cohort to the Fall 2017 cohort a change from 68% to 78%. That number dropped to 71% for the Fall 2018 cohort. Much of

the change was due to a smaller entering class. The two-year retention rate has increased from 61% to 65% comparing the cohorts entering in 2014 to those in 2017. Lincoln's average first year retention rate falls somewhere in the middle when compared to competitor and comparable schools but at the bottom when compared to more aspirational institutions.

LU Retention rate by entering Fall cohort					
	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
One-year	77.4%	72.6%	68.1%	78.3%	71.3%
Two-year	61.1%	62.5%	57.8%	65.2%	

Peer institutions average one-year retention rates 5-year average: Fall entering cohorts 2013-2017			
Lincoln University	Competitor	Comparable	Aspirational
73.2%	77.3%	73.5%	88.8%

5-year average one-year retention rate: Competitors
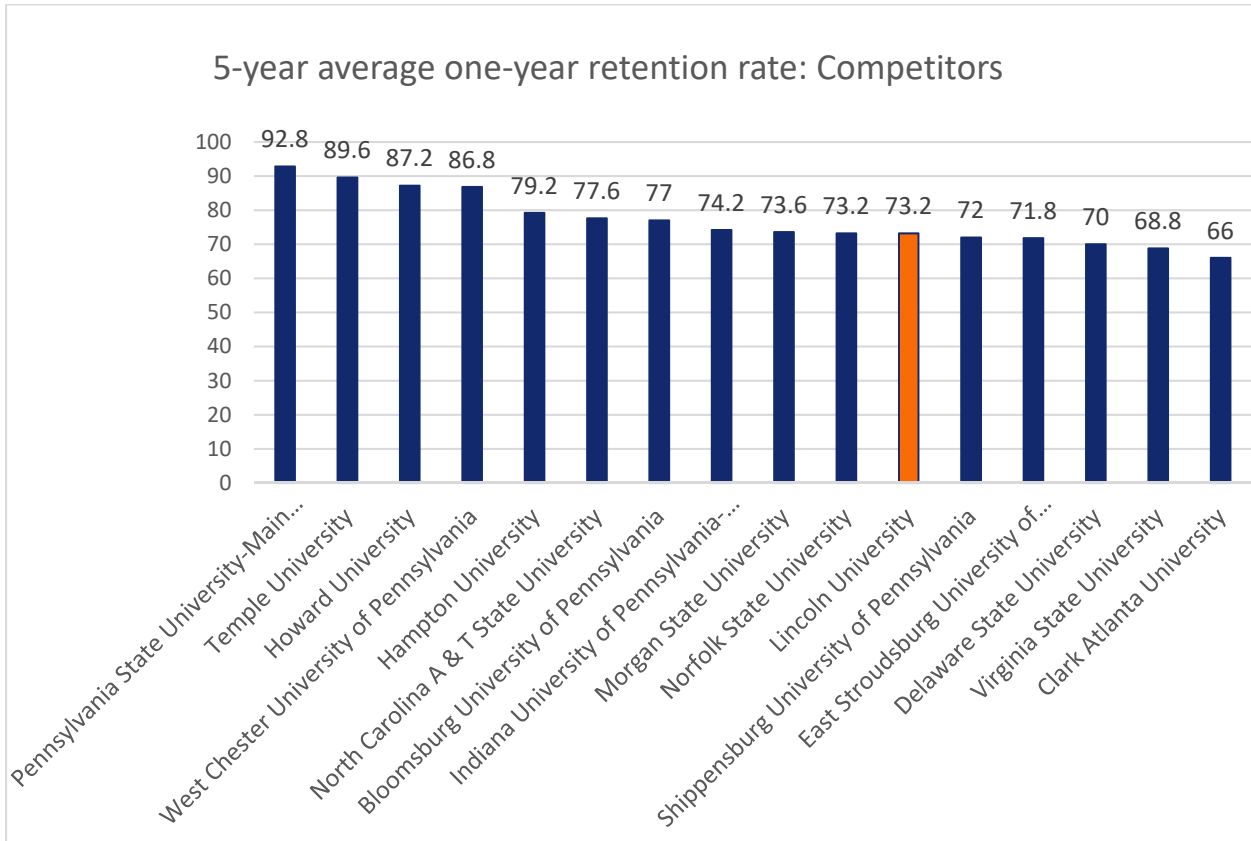
5-year average one-year retention rate: Comparables

University	Rate
University of Mary Washington	81.4
New College of Florida	81
University of Minnesota-Morris	80.2
University of North Carolina at Asheville	77.8
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	76.6
Eastern Connecticut State University	76.2
University of Montevallo	76.2
Claflin University	74.8
Keene State College	74.2
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania	73.2
Lincoln University	73.2
Elizabeth City State University	71.2
University of Wisconsin-Superior	69.2
University of South Carolina-Aiken	67.6
Shepherd University	65.4
Kentucky State University	56.8

5-year average one-year retention rate: Aspiring

University	Rate
The College of New Jersey	93.8
Franklin and Marshall College	91.6
Muhlenberg College	91.2
Spelman College	89.4
SUNY College at Geneseo	88.4
Truman State University	87.4
Ursinus College	87.2
St Mary's College of Maryland	87
Ramapo College of New Jersey	86.6
Georgia College & State University	85
Lincoln University	73.2
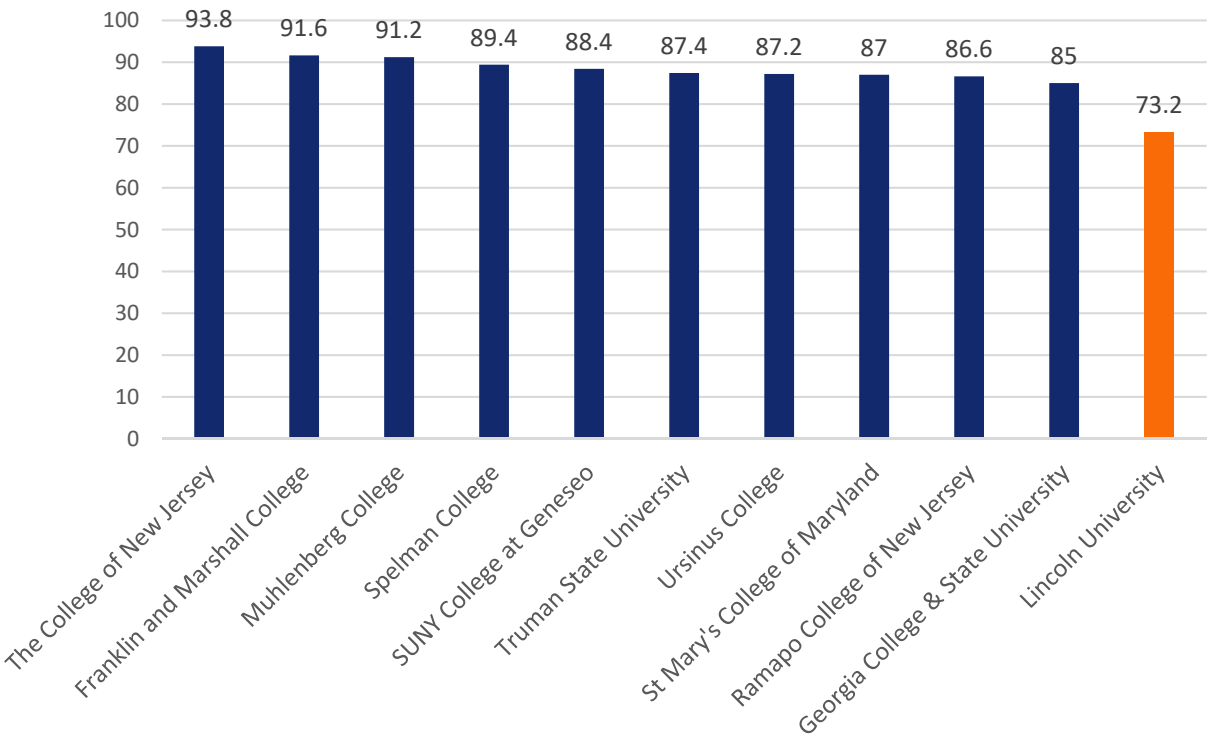
Transfer out data shows a decrease from 9% to 7% between Fall 2013 and Fall 2018. Forty-five percent of students who do not return, transfer out and typically end up attending another university usually community college or an institution in their home state. Most of the students who transfer out do so after freshman year. Most of the students who transfer from Lincoln, leave in good academic standing.

Transfer out student analysis*					
	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
Total # of students	146	123	162	197	136
% Freshman	71%	63%	61%	76%	71%
% in good academic standing	64%	71%	72%	71%	74%
*Students who were enrolled in Fall term but enrolled elsewhere the following year					

Top transfer-out institutions						
	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	5-year total
Comm. Coll. Of Philadelphia (PA)	16	10	19	25	15	85
Delaware County Comm. Coll. (PA)	9	8	6	9	5	37
Delaware State University (DE)	4			7		11
Temple University (PA)			4		4	8
Prince Georges Comm. Coll. (MD)				8		8
Wilmington University (DE)				7		7
Comm. Coll. of Allegheny County (PA)					5	5
Bowie State University (MD)					5	5

Fourteen of the undergraduate programs have an average time to degree of 4+ years for those who completed between Summer 2016 and Spring 2018. Eight programs have an average time to degree greater than 2 years for Transfer students who completed between Summer 2016 and Spring 2018.

Undergraduate Time to Degree - 2016-2018 Completers by Gender

	Female		Male	
	Avg. Time to degree	# of students	Avg. Time to degree	# of students
Graduate	1.7	161	1.7	81
Freshman	3.6	266	4.0	128
Transfer	2.1	79	2.3	48

Undergraduate Time to Degree - 2016-2018 Completers

	Freshman	
	Avg. Time to degree⌐	# of students
General Science	7.00	1
Clinical Psychology	6.25	4
Organizational Psychology	5.00	1
Mathematics	4.50	4
Broadcast Journalism	4.50	2
Health Science	4.47	51
Religion	4.00	2
Print Journalism	4.00	1
Physics	4.00	1
Philosophy	4.00	2
History	4.00	4
Engineering Science	4.00	1
Criminal Justice	4.00	26
BIT: Information Technology	4.00	5

The four-year graduation rate has improved from 28% of those who entered in Fall 2008 to 32.2% for the class entering in 2015. The average four-year graduation rate (2013-2017) lands near the bottom when compared to Lincoln's competitor and comparable institutions and dead last when compared to aspirational peers.
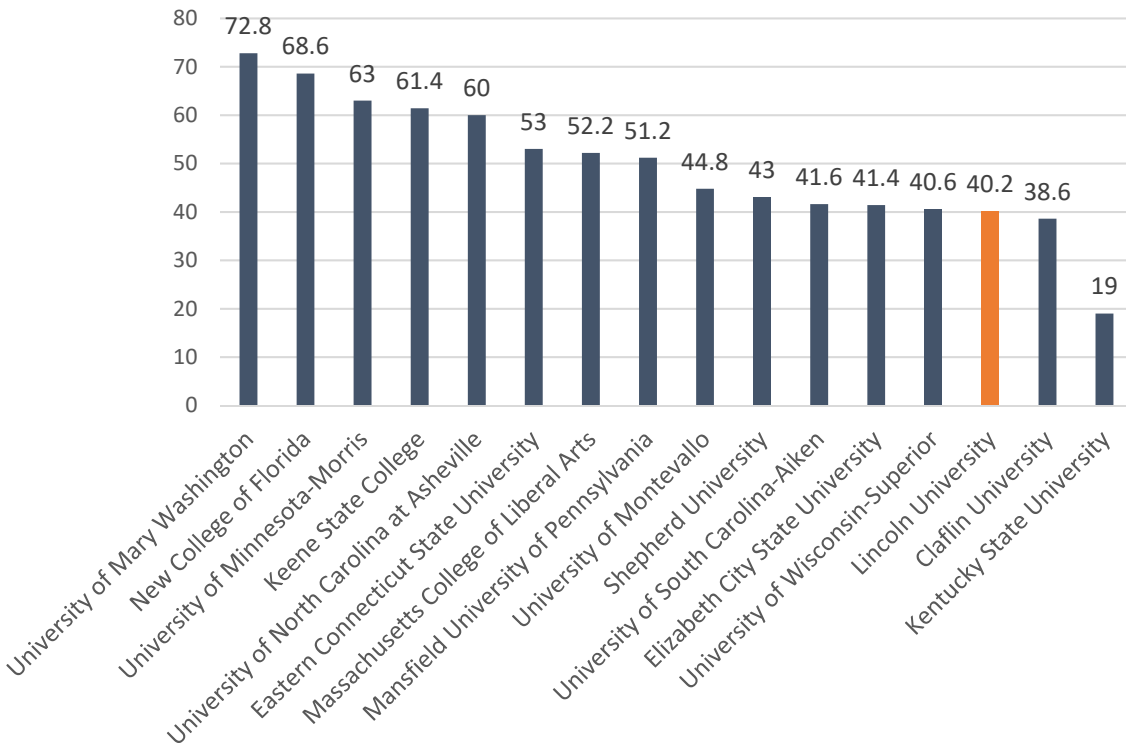
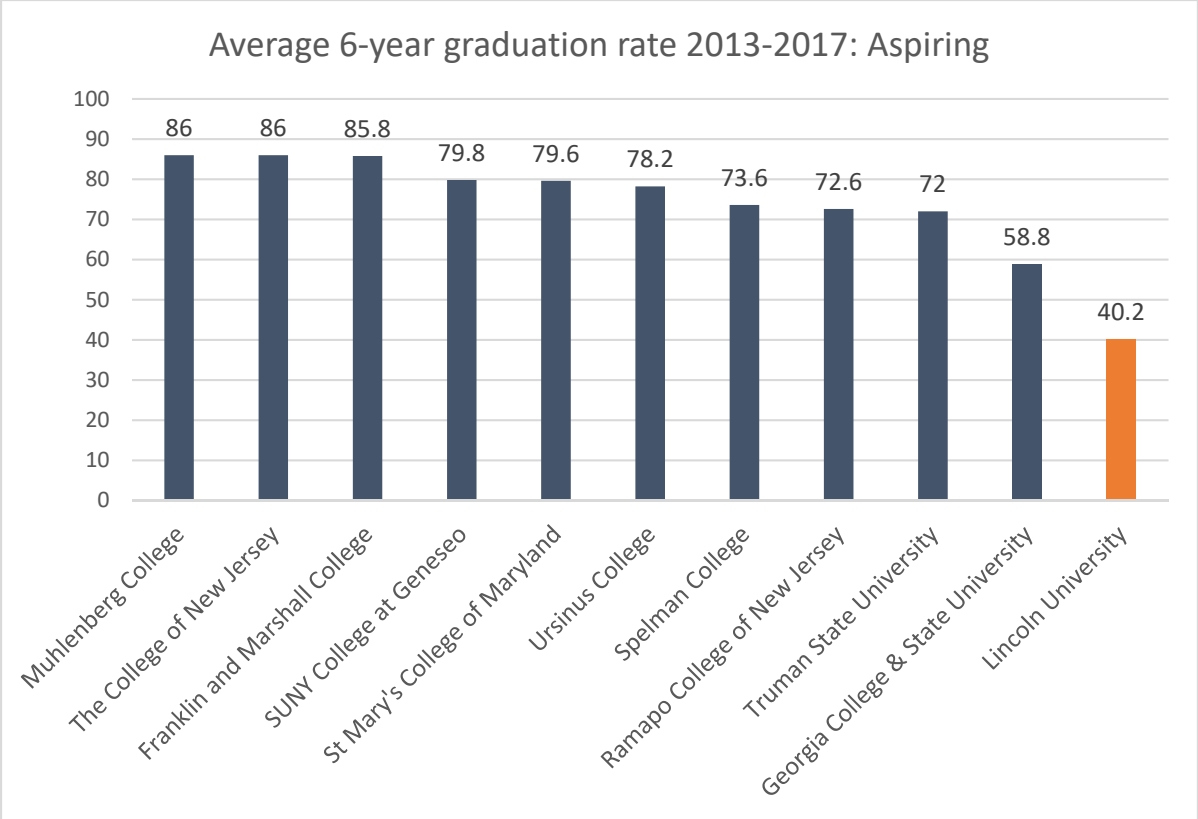| Graduation Rates			
Entering Fall Term	4-Year	5-Year	6-Year
2008	23.5%	38.2%	43.3%
2009	24.2%	39.2%	42.1%
2010	24.6%	38.7%	42.9%
2011	28.5%	42.6%	45.9%
2012	27.1%	42.1%	46.8%
2013	29.3%	41.1%	47.1%
2014	26.6%	41.5%	
2015	32.2%		

And while the six-year graduation rate has also improved from 43.3% for the 2008 cohort to 47.1% for the 2013 cohort, the average six-year graduation rate (2013-2017) also falls near the bottom when compared to Lincoln's competitor and comparable institutions and last when compared to aspirational peers.

Average 6-year graduation rate 2013-2017: Competitors

Institution	Rate
Penn State - Main Campus	86
West Chester University	68.8
Temple University	68
Bloomsburg University	62.8
Howard University	61.4
Hampton University	58.4
Shippensburg University	56.8
East Stroudsburg University	56.6
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	52.2
Virginia State University	44.4
North Carolina A & T State University	43.8
Lincoln University	40.2
Clark Atlanta University	39.6
Delaware State University	38
Norfolk State University	34.6
Morgan State University	30.6

Average 6-year graduation rate 2013-2017: Comparable

Institution	Rate
University of Mary Washington	72.8
New College of Florida	68.6
University of Minnesota-Morris	63
Keene State College	61.4
University of North Carolina at Asheville	60
Eastern Connecticut State University	53
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	52.2
Mansfield University of Pennsylvania	51.2
University of Montevallo	44.8
Shepherd University	43
University of South Carolina-Aiken	41.6
Elizabeth City State University	41.4
University of Wisconsin-Superior	40.6
Lincoln University	40.2
Claflin University	38.6
Kentucky State University	19

Average 6-year graduation rate 2013-2017: Aspiring

College	Rate
Muhlenberg College	86
The College of New Jersey	86
Franklin and Marshall College	85.8
SUNY College at Geneseo	79.8
St Mary's College of Maryland	79.6
Ursinus College	78.2
Spelman College	73.6
Ramapo College of New Jersey	72.6
Truman State University	72
Georgia College & State University	58.8
Lincoln University	40.2

The proportion of students attending Lincoln University who come from families making $40,000 or less has grown to nearly half of the student body over the past five years. Almost two-thirds of our undergraduate students have a family income less than $60,000. Sixty-five percent of all Lincoln students are Pell recipients and almost 90% receive some form of scholarship or grant. Many, over 80% rely on Federal Loans to assist with the cost of attendance. For most, the current combination of scholarships, grants and loans still leaves a financial gap between the total aid package and full cost of attendance. The average financial gap for an In-State Pell eligible student is about $3000. For Out-of-State Pell recipients, the gap increases to about $8000. Even more concerning is that for Non-Pell eligible students the In-State gap increases to $9000 and for those Out-of-State the average gap is about $13,000. Some of the gap can be closed through the Parent Plus Loan, but given the socio-economic level of most students, the loan application is usually denied.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Scholarships or Grants recipients	87%	88%	89%	91%	86%
Pell Grants recipients	63%	63%	65%	65%	65%
Federal Student Loans recipients	86%	87%	87%	81%	83%

Household Income	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Less than $60,000	62%	67%	66%	69%	64%
Less than $50,000	49%	59%	59%	61%	56%
Less than $40,000	38%	47%	47%	49%	44%
Less than $30,000	28%	33%	32%	34%	30%

Moreover, denied Parent Plus Loans allows an additional $4000 in loan towards the financial gap, but in many cases this is insufficient for moving students to a zero balance. When we juxtaposition financial data with data on the transfer out rate, it is not surprising that students in good academic standing choose to leave Lincoln to attend less expensive community colleges or more cost efficient colleges in their home state.

Implications of Retention Trends for Persistence, Retention, and Completion Strategies

Our internal data analysis suggests that overall improvements in enrollment are partly due to increases in retention over the past few years. Moreover, the data reveals that the four-year and 6-year graduation rates are improving. While this is great news, when compared to both competitor and comparable institutions, Lincoln's retention and graduation rates are among the bottom. Most noticeable is that when these indicators are compared to aspirational peers, Lincoln falls way short. Further, the data reveals that while retention is improving, many students who transfer out tend to continue their education at a less costly institution. Taken together, this data suggests that undergraduate enrollment growth from 2040 in 2019 to 2250 by 2030 (9%) at Lincoln can occur by placing a priority on retaining and graduating students in a timely fashion paying close attention to closing the gap between the financial aid awarded and the total cost of attendance. Accordingly, the SEM Plan sets the following goals and objectives:

GOAL: By 2030 improve retention rates so that Lincoln University ranks first among comparable institutions; within the top three among competitor institutions; and within the top five among aspirational peers while growing total enrollment by 9% to 2250.

Objective 1:   Develop Wrap Around services for students (using Athletics as a model)

Objective 2:   Design and implement a robust withdrawal prevention program to intervene before students withdraw.

Objective 3:   Create Freshmen Interest Groups or Cohorts

Objective 4: Ensure that all students participate in high impact learning opportunities—internships, service learning, co-op, alternative winter or spring breaks, international experiences and career development

Objective 5: Forever Lions—alumni serve as mentors and create meaningful relationships with students during their freshmen year with hopes it continues beyond graduation

Objective 6: Enhance campus life and living-learning programming in residence halls

Objective 7: Increase number of beds and renovate existing residence halls to enhance student engagement and create living-learning environment

GOAL: By 2030 improve average four-year graduation rate so that Lincoln University is first among comparable institutions; within the top three among competitor institutions; and within the top five among aspirational peers.

Objective 1: Review and re-design instructional programs to ensure curriculum coherence and achieve the mission.

Objective 2: Reduce time and credit hours to degree completion

Objective 3: Build a robust academic advising center and program model which supports student success

Objective 4: Identify and eliminate administrative barriers to student success

GOAL: Decrease the financial gap between financial aid awarded and total cost of attendance so that the average gap for Pell eligible students is less than $2000 annually and the average gap for non-Pell eligible students is $6000 annually.

Objective 1: Redesign merit scholarship formula towards saving more dollars for need-based grants

Objective 2: Apply donor dollars where applicable to merit scholars towards releasing more institutional funds to be applied to need-based grants.

*Objective 3: Increase student employment towards helping students pay a portion of their debt.*

Objective 4: Redesign financial aid award letters towards offering families a better understanding of how scholarship, grants, loans and student employment can combine to reduce the expected contribution from parents and how payment plans can be used to better manage paying down balances.

Objective 5:   Increase fundraising efforts towards building a robust need-based scholarship fund and annual unrestricted dollars.

School for Adult and Continuing Education (SACE) Goals

Enrollment Trends in Adult and Continuing Education:

National data shows that between 2015 and 2026, enrollment is projected to increase 11% for adult learners between the ages of 25 and 34, and increase 4% for students aged 35+.
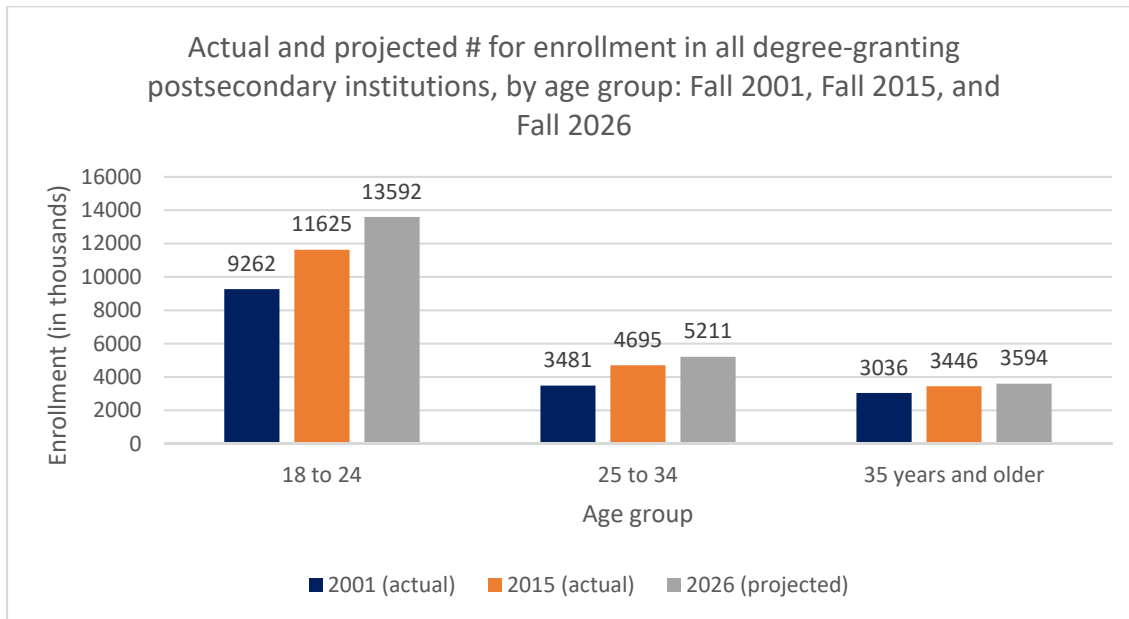
Source: National Center for Education Statistics

Graduate enrollment at SACE, however, decreased by 48% between 2011 and 2018. This was mostly due to the elimination of the Masters in Human Services program, which offered Masters degree opportunities for individuals without an undergraduate degree, yet several other programs show steady declines as well.

Graduate Enrollment					
Master's Program	**Fall 2015**	**Fall 2016**	**Fall 2017**	**Fall 2018**	**Fall 2019**
Total graduate enrollment	**208**	**268**	**264**	**254**	**201**
Human Services	45	73	74	78	68
Early Childhood Ed.	70	30	25	28	36
Business Administration	50	57	43	43	35
Educational Leadership	27	21	28	31	26
Early Childhood Ed & Special Ed.		37	43	31	15
Counseling	12	30	30	28	14
Non-matriculating	4	12	16	7	5
Education - conditional		8	5	8	2

The Masters in Human Services continues to lead graduate enrollment at SACE and continues to have the shortest average time to degree. Additionally, the program graduated the most number of students between Summer 2016 and Spring 2018. Time to degree for all of the Education programs is more than 2 years with some averaging over three years to complete.

Average Time to Degree by Program
2017-2018

	# of students	Avg. Time to degree
Human Services	45	1.60
Business Administraton	26	1.77
Counseling	15	2.53
Early Childhood Ed. & Special Ed.	17	3.41
Educational Leadership	10	3.50
Early Childhood Ed.	13	4.15
Grand Total	125	2.40

While the Human Services degree continues to produce the most graduates in the least amount of time, the clinical qualifications for individuals in many human services arenas have increased. Currently, the Human Services curriculum lacks the clinical focus of the field. Some of the counseling qualifications needed are embedded in the Counseling Program's curriculum, however, low enrollments coupled with the majority of graduates forgoing the licensure exam led to the decision to eliminate the program.

The Master of Education - Early Childhood Education PreK-4/Special Education offers a dual certification program, and the Educational Leadership program prepares students for licensure. However, no other certificate or continuing education credit opportunities current exist at SACE.

SACE also offers four adult completion programs (Bachelor Degree Completion Programs) which include Human Services, Management, Sociology and Criminal Justice. There are currently 134 students enrolled across the four programs with 107 of the total enrolled in the Human Services program.

The enrollment trends at SACE coupled with changing focus in many fields offers insight into how the SEM Plan may: (1) review and revise the current portfolio of degree offerings and (2) propose new directions where opportunities exist towards doubling the enrollment by the year 2030. As such the following strategic goals and objectives have been identified:

GOAL: Identify the Adult Completion and Graduate Degree Programs most consistent with University strengths and legacy.

Objective 1:   Review and eliminate programs that are not supporting the mission of SACE.

Objective 2:   Explore the conversion of the Masters in Human Services to a Masters of Social Work

Objective 3:   Explore a Liberal Arts Adult Completion Degree

Objective 4:   Review and revise all Education degree curricula towards reducing time to degree

GOAL: SACE will increase and achieve optimal enrollment in its degree granting programs through the following goals, objectives and strategies.

Objective 1:   Increase the number of new students enrolled in existing SACE programs.

Objective 2:   Develop an administrative structure that clearly supports enrollment (recruitment) versus academic affairs versus student services (retention)

Objective 3: Enhance Student Admissions through implementing a one-stop services to promote student satisfaction; implementing and utilizing CRM System to develop enrollment funnel and increasing the number and quality of applicants for each program

GOAL: Increase enrollment portfolio through micro-credentialing programs and on-line course and program options

Objective 1:   Develop micro-credential options to extend SACE offering

Objective 2:   Develop continuing education areas to support new enrollment at SACE

Objective 3:   Create a portfolio of on-line offerings both courses and programs to support new SACE Enrollment

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STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVE STEERING Committee

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